Exploits of Sherlock Holmes---The Mystery of the Gloria Scott

Being an Account of a Case in Which the Famous Detective Uses His Deductive Powers to Ferret Out the Author of a Letter Which Caused the Death of an English Judge

HAVE some papers here," said my friend Sherlock Holmes, as we sat one winter's night on either side of the fire, "which I really think, Watson, that it would be worth your while to glance over. These are the documents in the extraordinary case of the Gloria Scott, and this is the message which struck Justice of the Peace Trevor dead with horror when he read it."

He had picked from a drawer, a little tarnished cylinder and undoing the tape, he handed me a short note scrawled upon a halfsheet of slate-gray paper.

"The supply of game for London is going steadily up," it ran. "Head-keeper Hudson, we believe, has been now told to receive all cigar." orders for fly-paper and for preservation of your hen-pheasant's

As I glanced up from reading this enigmatical message, I saw Trevor's manner toward me. Even his son Holmes chuckling at the expression upon my face.

"You look a little bewildered," said he. "I cannot see how such a message as this could inspire horror.

It seems to me to be rather grotesque than otherwise," "Very likely. Yet the fact remains that the reader who was a fine, robust old man, was knocked clean down by it as if it had

been the butt end of a pistol." 'You arouse my curiosity," said I. "But why did you say just I was causing him uneasiness now that there were very particular reasons why I should study that I drew my visit to a

"Because it was the first in which I was ever engaged." I had often endeavored to elicit from my companion what had first turned his mind in the direction of criminal research, but had never caught him before in a communicative humor. Now he sat forward in his armichair and spread out the documents upon his knees. Then he lit his pipe and sat for some time smoking and

"You never heard me talk of Victor Trevor?" he asked. "He was the only friend I made during the two years I was at college. I was never a very acciable fellow, Watson, always rather fond of moping in my rooms and working out my own little methods of thought, so that I flever mixed much with the men of my year. Bar fencing and boxing, I had few athletic tastes, and then my line of study was quite distinct from that of the other fellows, so that we had no points of contact at all. Trevor was the only man I knew, and that only through the accident of his bull terrier freezing on to my ancle one morning as I went down to chapel.

"It was a prosaic way of forming a friendship, but it was effective. I was laid by the heels for ten days, and Trevor used to come in to inquire after me. At first it was only a minute's chat, but soon his visits lengthened, and before the end of the term we were close friends. He was a hearty, full-blooded fellow, full of spirits and energy, the very opposite to me in most respects, but we had some subjects in common, and it was a bond of union when I found that he was as friendless as i. Finally, he invited me down to his father's place at Donnithorpe, in Norfolk, and I accepted his hospitality for a month of the long vacation.

"Old Trevor was evidently a man of some wealth and consideration, a J. P., and a landed proprietor. Donnithorpe is a little hamlet just to the north of Langmere, in the country of the Broads. The house was an old-fashioned, wide-spread, oak-beamed brick building, with a fine lime-lined avenue leading up to it. There was excellent wild duck shooting in the fens, remarkably good fishing, a small but select library, taken over, as I understood, from a former occupant, and a tolerable cook, so that he would be a fastidious man who could not put in a pleasant month there.

"Trevor senior was a widower, and my friend his only son. "There had been a daughter, I heard, but she had died of diphtheria while on a visit to Birmingham. The father interested me extremely. He was a man of little culture, but with a considerable amount of rude strength, both physically and mentally. He knew hardly any books, but he had traveled far, had seen much of the world and had remembered all that he had learned. In person he was a thick-set, burly man with a shock of grizzled hair, a brown, weather-beaten face and blue eyes which were keen to the verge of flerceness. Yet he had a reputation for kindness and charity on the country-side, and was noted for the leniency of his sentences

"One evening, shortly after my arrival, we were sitting over a glass of port after dinner, when young Trevor began to talk about those habits of observation and inference which I had already formed into a system, although I had not yet appreciated the part which they were to play in my life. The old man evidently thought that ment's conversation." his son was exaggerating in his description of one or two trivial feats which I had performed.

"'Come, now, Mr. Holmes,' said he, laughing good-humoredly,

'I'm an excellent subject, if you can deduce anything from me.' that you have gone about in fear of some personal attack within the last twelve-month.

"The laugh faded from his lips, and he stared at me in great

"Well, that's true enough,' said he. 'You know, Victor,' turning to his son, 'when we broke up that poaching gang they swore to knife us, and Sir Edward Holly has actually been attacked. I've always been on my guard since then, though I have no idea how you know it."

"You have a very handsome stick,' I answered. 'By the inscription I observed that you had not had it more than a year. But you have taken some pains to bore the head of it and pour melted lead into the hole so as to make it a formidable weapon. I argued that you would not take such precautions unless you had some danger to fear.'

"'Anything else?' he asked, smiling. "'You have boxed a good deal in your youth."

"'Right again. How did you know it? Is my nose knocked

a little out of the straight?" "'No,' said I. 'It is your ears. They have the peculiar flat-

tening and thickening which marks the boxing man. 'Anything else?

" 'Made all my money at the gold fields.

"You have done a good deal of digging by your callousities."

"'You have been in New Zealand."

" 'Right again.' " 'You have visited Japan.'

" 'Quite true.'

"'And you have been most intimately associated with someone whose initials were J. A., and whom you afterward were eager to

"Mr. Trevor stood slowly up, fixed his large blue eyes upon me with a strange, wild stare and then pitched forward, with his face among the nutshells which strewed the cloth, in a dead faint.

"You can imagine, Watson, how shocked both his son and I were. His attack did not last long, however, for when we undid his collar and sprinkled the water from one of the finger glasses over his face he gave a gasp on two and sat up.

"'Ah, boys,' said he, forcing a smile, 'I hope I haven't frightened you. Strong as I look, there is a weak place in my heart, and It does not take much to knock me over. I don't know how you manage this, Mr. Holmes, but it seems to me that all the detectives of fact and of fancy would be children in your hands. That's your line of life, sir, and you may take the word of a man who has seen something of the world."

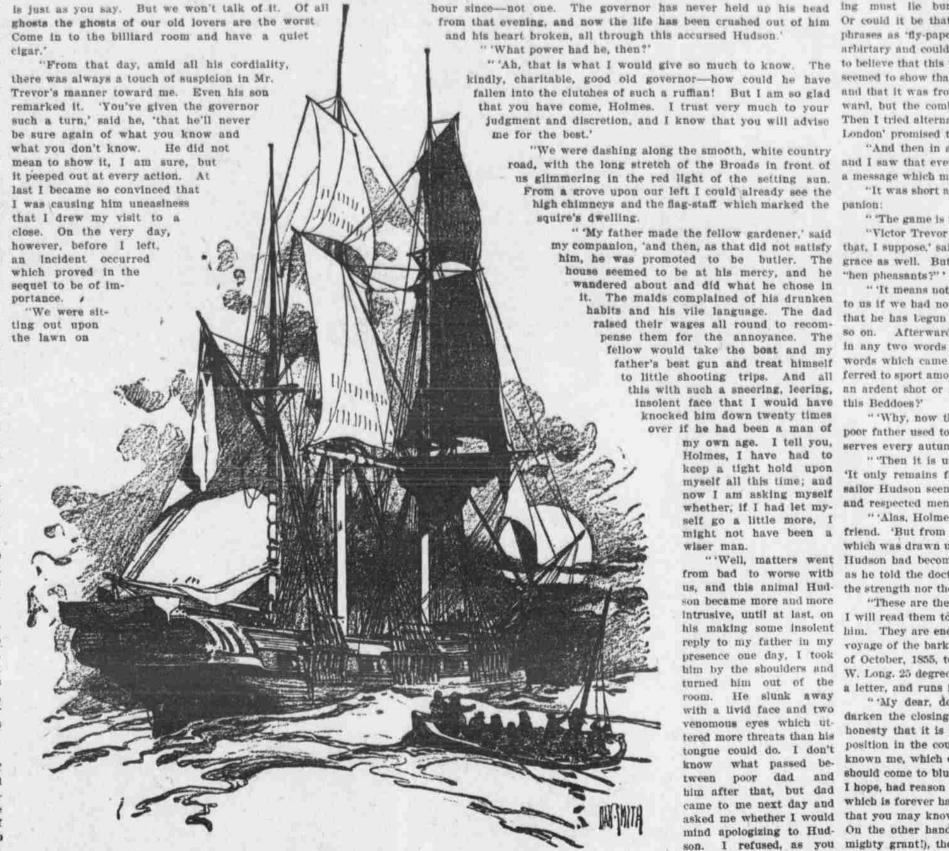
"And that recommendation, with the exaggerated estimate of my ability with which he prefaced it, was, if you will believe me, manner for which he had been remarkable. Watson, the very first thing which ever made me feel that a profession might be made out of what had up to that time been the merest hobby. At the moment, however, I was too much concerned at the sudden illness of my host to think of anything else.

"'I hope that I have said nothing to pain you?' said I.

"'Well, you certainly touched upon rather a tender point news. Might I ask how you know, and how much you know?' He spoke now in a half-jesting fashion, but a look of terror still lurked at the back of his eyes.

"'It is simplicity itself,' said I, 'when you bared your arm to draw that fish into the boat I saw that J. A. had been tattooed in the bend of the elbow. The letters were still legible, but it was perfeetly clear from their blurred appearance and from the staining of day?" the skin around them, that efforts had been made to obliterate them. It was obvious, then, that those initials had once been very familiar

to you, and that you had afterward wished to forget them.' "'What an eye you have!' he cried, with a sigh of relief. 'It Thrilling Chapters from the Life Story of the World's Greatest Detective Character



"THE GLORIA SCOTT."

through the window that he was writing busily.

dinary patience toward him," I answered.

" 'And how?' I asked eagerly.

see about that!"

his intention in the thick voice of a half-drunken man.

worthy fellow rather roughly," said the dad, turning to me,

left the house, leaving my father in a state of pitiable nervousness.

Night after night I heard him pacing his room, and it was just as

"'In a most extraordinary fashion. A letter arrived for my

he was recovering his confidence that the blow did at last fall.'

father yesterday evening, bearing the Fordingbridge postmark. My

father read it, clapped both his hands to his head and began run-

ning round the room in little circles like a man who has been driven

out of his senses. When I at last drew him down onto the sofa his

mouth and eyelids were all puckered on one side, and I saw that he

had a stroke. Dr. Fordham came over at once. We put him to

consciousness, and I think that we shall hardly find him alive.'

sage was absurd and trivial. Ah, my God, it is as I feared!"

been in this letter to cause so dreadful a result?'

with grief, a gentleman in black emerged from it.

" 'Almost immediately after you left."

"'Did he recover consciousness?"

"'For an instant before the end."

" 'Any message for me?'

"'When did it happen, doctor?' asked Trevor.

bed; but the paralysis has spread, he has shown no sign of returning

"'You horrify me, Trevor!' I cried. 'What then could have

"'Nothing. There lies the inexplicable part of it. The mea-

"As he spoke we came round the curve of the avenue, and saw

" 'Only that the papers were in the back drawer of the Japanese

"'My friend ascended with the doctor to the chamber of death,

while I remained in the study, turning the whole matter over and

life. What was the past of this Trevor, pugilist, traveler and gold

digger, and how had he placed himself in the power of this acid-

faced seaman? Why, too, should he faint at an allusion to the half-

effaced initials upon his arm, and die of fright when he had a letter

from Fordingham? Then I remembered that Fordingham was in

Hampshire, and that this Mr. Beddoes, whom the seaman had gone

living in Hampshire. The letter, then, might either come from

which appeared to exist, or it might come from Beddoes, warning

an old confederate that such a betraval was imminent. So far it

so, it must have been one of those ingenious secret codes which

I could pluck it forth. For an hour I sat pondering over it in the

gloom, until at last a weeping maid brought in a lamp, and close at

over in my head, and feeling as somber as ever I had done in my

down. As we dashed up to the door my friend's face convulsed

"'What is his name?' asked my host.

"'He would not give any."

peared a little wizened fellow with a cringing manner and a shambling style of walking. He wore an open jacket, with a splotch of tar on the sleeve, a red-and-black check shirt, dungaree trousers, 'I fear there is not very much,' I answered; 'I might suggest and heavy boots badly worn. His face was thin and brown and crafty, with a perpetual smile upon it, which showed an irregular line of yellow teeth, and his crinkled hands were half closed in a way that is distinctive of sailors. As he came slouching across the lawn I heard Mr. Trevor make a sort of biccoughing noise in his throat, and, jumping out of his chair, he ran into the house. He was back in a moment, and I smelt a strong reek of brandy as he

" 'Well, my man,' said he, 'what can I do for you?'

" 'You don't know me?' he asked.

"'Hudson it is, sir,' said the seaman. 'Why, it's thirty years

me still picking my salt meat out of the harness cask.' 'Tut, you will find that I have not forgotten old times,' cried Mr. Trevor, and, walking toward the sailor, he said something in a low voice. 'Go into the kitchen,' he continued out loud, 'and you

"'Thank you, sir,' said the seaman, touching his forelock. 'I'm just off a two-yearer in an eight-knot tramp, short-handed at that, and I wants a rest. I thought I'd get it either with Mr. Bed-

"'Ah!' cried Mr. Trevor. 'You know where Mr. Beddoes is?' "'Bless you, sir, I know where all my old friends are,' said the fellow with a sinister smile, and he slouched off after the maid to the kitchen. Mr. Trevor mumbled something to us about having been shipmate with the man when he was going back to the diggings, and then, leaving us on the lawn, he went indoors. An hour later, when we entered the house, we found him stretched dead drunk upon the dining room sofa. The whole incident left a most ugly impression upon my mind, and I was not sorry next day to leave Donnithorpe behind me, for I felt that my presence must be a source

"All this occurred during the first month of the long vacation. close, I received a telegram from my friend imploring me to return cabinet. and assistance. Of course I dropped everything and set out for

"He met me with the dog-cart at the station, and I saw at a glance that the two last months had been very trying ones for him. He had grown thin and careworn, and had lost the loud, cheery

"The governor is dying,' were the first words he said.

" 'Apoplexy. Nervous shock. He's been on the verge all day. "I was, as you may think, Watson, horrified at this unexpected

"'What has caused it?' I asked.

we drive. You remember that fellow who came upon the evening grotesque, as described by the son? He must have misread it. If before you left us?" " 'Perfectly.'

"'I have no idea."

"'It was the devil, Holmes,' he cried.

"I started at him in astonishment.

view across the Broads, when a maid was a man at the door who wanted to see Mr. Trevor.

"'What does he want, then?"

"'He says that you know him, and that he only wants a mo-"Show him round here." An instant afterward there ap-

"The sailor stood looking at him with puckered eyes, and with the same loose-lipped smile upon his face.

"'Why, dear me, it is surely Hudson,' said Mr. Trevor in a tone

and more since I saw you last. Here you are in your house, and

will get food and drink. I have no doubt that I shall find you a

does or with you.

of embarrassment to my friend.

I went up to my London rooms, where I spent seven weeks working out a few experiments in organic chemistry. One day, however, when the autumn was far advanced and the vacation drawing to a to Donnithorpe, and saying that he was in great need of my advice the north once more.

'Impossible!' I cried. 'What is the matter?'

to visit and presumably to blackmail, had also been mentioned as I doubt if we shall find him alive." Hudson, the seaman, saying that he had betrayed the guilty secret

"'Ah, that is the point. Jump in and we can talk it over while seemed clear enough. But then how could this letter be trivial and

mean one thing while they seem to mean another. I must see this "'Do you know who it was that we let into the house that letter. If there were a hidden meaning in it, I was confident that

"Yes, it was the devil himself. We have not had a peaceful posite to me, drew the lamp to the edge of the table and handed me

a short note scribbled, as you see, upon a single sheet of gray paper. The supply of game for London is going steadily up,' it ran. Head-keeper Hudson, we believe, has been now told to receive all orders for fly-paper and for preservation of your hen-pheasant's life.' "I dare say my face looked as bewildered as yours did just now

when first I read this message. Then I reread it very carefully. It was evidently as I had thought, and some secret meanhour since—not one. The governor has never held up his head ing must lie buried in this strange combination of words. from that evening, and now the life has been crushed out of him. Or could it be that there was a prearranged significance to such phrases as 'fly-paper' and 'hen-pheasant?' Such a meaning would be arbirtary and could not be deduced in any way. And yet I was loath to believe that this was the case, and the presence of the word Hudson seemed to show that the subject of the message was as I had guessed, and that it was from Beddoes rather than the sailor. I tried it backward, but the combination 'life-pheasant's hen' was not encouraging. judgment and discretion, and I know that you will advise Then I tried alternate words, but neither 'the of for' nor 'supply game London' promised to throw any light upon it. "And then in an instant the key of the riddle was in my hands,

and I saw that every third word, beginning with the first, would give us glimmering in the red light of the setting sun, a message which might well drive old Trevor to despair.

"It was short and terse, the warning, as I now read it to my com-

"'The game is up. Hudson has told all. Fly for your life.' "Victor Trevor sank his face into his shaking hands. 'It must be my companion, 'and then, as that did not satisfy that, I suppose,' said be. 'This is worse than death, for it means dishim, he was promoted to be butler. The grace as well. But what is the meaning of these "head keepers" and

"'It means nothing to the message, but it might mean a good deal to us if we had no other means of discovering the sender. You see that he has begun by writing "The " game " " is," and so on. Afterwards he had, to fulfill the prearranged cipher, to fill fellow would take the boat and my in any two words in each space. He would naturally use the first father's best gun and treat himself words which came to his mind, and if there were so many which reto little shooting trips. And all ferred to sport among them, you may be tolerably sure that he is either this with such a sneering, leering, an ardent shot or interested in breeding. Do you know anything of insolent face that I would have this Beddoes?'

"'Why, now that you mention it,' said he, 'I remember that my poor father used to have an invitation from him to shoot over his preserves every autumn.

"Then it is undoubtedly from him that the note comes,' said L 'It only remains for us to find out what this secret was which the sailor Hudson seems to have held over the head of these two wealthy whether, if I had let my. and respected men.'

"'Alas, Holmes, I fear that it is one of sin and shame!" cried my might not have been a friend. 'But from you I shall have no secrets. Here is the statement which was drawn up by my father when he knew that the danger from "Well, matters went Hudson had become imminent. I found it in the Japanese cabinet, from bad to worse with as he told the doctor. Take it and read it to me, for a have neither us, and this animal Hud- the strength nor the courage to do it myself.'

"These are the very papers, Watson, which he handed to me, and intrusive, until at last, on I will read them to you, as I read them in the old study that night to his making some insolent him. They are endorsed outside, as you see, 'Some particulars of the reply to my father in my voyage of the bark Gloria Scott, from its leaving Falmouth on the 8th of October, 1855, to its destruction in N. Lat. 15 degrees 20 minutes. him by the shoulders and W. Long. 25 degrees 14 minutes, on November 6.º It is in the form of a letter, and runs in this way:

"'My dear, dear son, now that approaching disgrace begins to darken the closing years of my life, I can write with all truth and honesty that it is not the terror of the law, it is not the loss of my tongue could do. I don't position in the county, nor is it my fall in the eyes of all who have known me, which cuts me to the heart; but it is the thought that you tween poor dad and should come to blush for me-you who love me and who have seldom. him after that, but dad I hope, had reason to do other than respect me. But if the blow falls came to me next day and which is forever hanging over me, then I should wish you to read this. asked me whether I would that you may know straight from me how far I have been to blame. mind apologizing to Hud- On the other hand, if all should go well (which may kind God Alson. I refused, as you mighty grant!), then, if by any chance this paper should be still unmay imagine, and asked destroyed and should fall into your hands, I conjure you, by all you my father how he could hold sacred, by the memory of your dear mother, and by the love garden chairs, the three of us, basking in the sun and admiring the allow such a wretch to take such liberties with himself and his which has been between us, to hurl it into the fire and to never give one thought to it again.

"" "Ah, my boy," said he, "it is all very well to talk, but you "'If then your eye goes on to read this line, I know that I shall don't know how I am placed. But you shall know, Victor. I'll already have been exposed and dragged from my home, or, as is more see that you shall know, come what may: You wouldn't believe likely, for you know that my heart is weak, be lying with my tongue harm of your poor old father, would you, lad?" He was very much sealed forever in death. In either case the time for suppression is moved, and shut himself up in the study all day, where I could see past, and every word which I tell you is the naked truth, and this I swear as I hope for mercy.

"That evening there came what seemed to me to be a grand "'My name, dear lad, is not Trevor. I was James Armitage in release, for Hudson told us that he was going to leave us. He my younger days, and you can understand now the shock that it was walked into the dining room as we sat after dinner, and announced to me a few weeks ago when your college friend addressed me in words which seemed to imply that he had surprised my secret. As "' "I've had enough of Norfolk," he said. "I'll run down to Armitage it was that I entered a London banking house, and as Mr. Beddoes in Hampshire. He'll be glad to see me as you were, I Armitage I was convicted of breaking my country's laws, and was sentenced to transportation. Do not think very harshly of me, laddic. ""You're not going away in an unkind spirit, Hudson, I It was a debt of honor, so called, which I had to pay, and I used money hope," said my father, with a tameness which made my blood boil. which was not my own to do it, in the certainty that I could replace "I've not had my 'pology," said he sulkily, glancing in my it before there could be any possibility of its being missed. But the most dreadful ill luck pursuedme. The money which I had reckoned "'"Victor, you will acknowledge that you have used this upon never came to hand, and a premature examination of accounts exposed my deficit. The case might have been dealt leniently with, "'"On the contrary, think that we have both shown extraorbut the laws were more barshly administered thirty years ago than now, and on my twenty-third birthday I found myself chained as a "Oh, you do, do you?" he snarled. "Very good, mate. We'll felon with thirty-seven other convicts in the 'tween decks of the bark Gloria Scott, bound for Australia. "He slouched out of the room, and half an hour afterward

"'It was the year '55, when the Crimean war was at its height. and the old convict ships had been largely used as transports in the Black sea. The government was compelled, therefore, to use smaller and less suitable vessels for sending out their prisoners. The Gloria Scott had been in the Chinese tea trade, but it was an old-fashioned, heavy-bowed, broad-beamed craft, and the new clippers had cut it out. It was a 500-ton boat; and besides its thirty-eight jailbirds, it carried twenty six of a crew, eighteen soldiers, a captain, three mates, a doctor, a chaplain, and four warders. Nearly a hundred souls were in

it, all told, when we set sail from Falmouth. "The partitions between the cells of the convicts, Instead of being of thick oak, as is usual in convict ships, were quite thin and frail. The man next to me, upon the aft side, was one whom I had particularly noticed when we were led down the quay. He was a young man with a clear, hairless face, a long, thin nose, and rather nrt-cracker jaws. He carried his head very jauntily in the air, had a swaggering style of walking, and was, above all else, remarkable for his extraordinary height. I don't think any of our heads would have in the fading light that every blind in the house had been drawn come up to his shoulder, and I am sure that he could not have measured less than six and a half feet. It was strange among so many sad and weary faces to see one which was full of energy and resolution. The sight of it was to me like a fire in a snowstorm. I was glad, then, to find that he was my neighbor, and gladder still when, in the dead of the night, I heard a whisper close to my ear, and found that he had managed to cut an opening in the board which separated us.

> "' "Hullo, chummy!" said he, "what's you name, and what are you here for?"

"'I answered him, and asked in turn who I was talking with, "I'm Jack Prendergast," said he, "and by God! you'll learn

to bless my name before you've done with me."

"'I remembered hearing of his case, for it was one which had made an immense sensation throughout the country some time before my own arrest. He was a man of good family and of great ability, but of incurably vicious habits, who had by an ingenious system of fraud obtained huge sums of money from the leading London merchants.

"'"Ha, ha! You remember my case!" said he, proudly.

" ' "Very well, indeed."

"" "Then maybe you remember something queer about it?"

"" "What was that, then?"

"' "I'd had nearly a quarter of a million, hadn't I?"

" "So it was said." "" But none was recovered, eh?"

" " "No."

""Well, where d'ye suppose the balance is?" he asked.

"" "I have no idea," said I.

"'"Right between my finger and thumb," he cried. "By God! I've got more pounds to my name than you've hairs on your head. her heels came my friend Trevor, pale but composed, with these very And if you've money, my son, and know how to handle it and spread papers which lie upon my knee held in his grasp. He sat down op- it out, you can do anything. Now, you don't think it likely that a (Continued on Page Eight.)